



AGE 13+



STARTER KIT

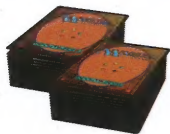
PLAY GUIDE

WELCOME TO MAGIC: THE GATHERING®

The *Magic: The Gathering Arena*® Starter Kit is designed to help newcomers discover the world of *Magic*™. This Starter Kit includes not only two physical decks but also digital copies of these decks for use on *MTG Arena*! To get playing, visit **MTGArena.com**. Download and install *MTG Arena*, and then play through the tutorial. You can play through the tutorial or restart it as many times as you'd like. Afterwards, you'll be able to use the included code to unlock your digital decks. If you get stuck while playing with your physical cards after completing the tutorial, you can use the FAQ and glossary at the end of this play guide to help you figure out what to do next.

This play guide is also meant to help you continue learning about *Magic* after your first game. There's no need to read the whole thing before you start playing. You can come back to this guide anytime to learn more.

CONTENTS



Two 60-card decks



2 deck boxes
(Images may vary)



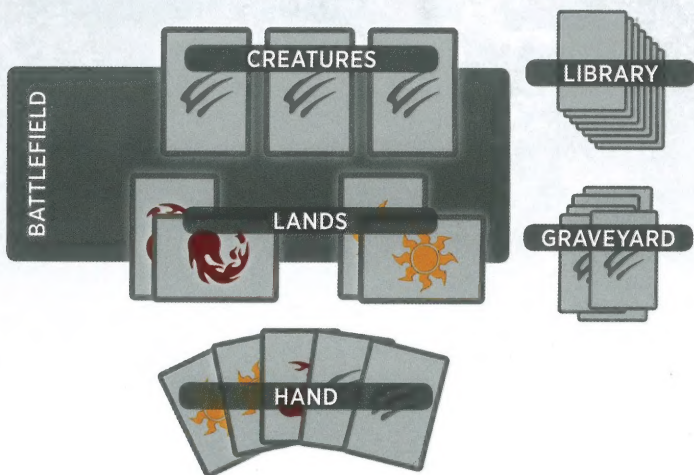
2 reference cards



MTG Arena
code card

STARTING A TABLETOP GAME

1. Shuffle your deck.
2. Choose which player will go first at random (by flipping a coin, rolling dice, etc.).
3. Make sure each player has a way to track their life total. Each player starts at 20 life.
4. Look at your opening hand. If you have fewer than two or more than five lands, or if you won't be able to cast any creatures on your first few turns, you can exchange your hand for a new one. This is called taking a mulligan (see "Mulligan" in the glossary).
5. Once both players have decided to keep their hands, the game begins. Remember, the player who goes first skips their first draw step.
6. Once you've played a few turns, your play area should look something like this:



GAME ACTIONS

TAPPING AND UNTAPPING

To tap a card is to turn it sideways to show that it has been used for the turn.

ATTACK

Creatures tap when they attack.



ADD MANA

Lands make mana when you tap them.



ACTIVATE

Some abilities on cards have the tap symbol in their cost. Tap the card to pay that cost.



When a card is tapped, you can't tap it again until it's been untapped (turned back upright). As your turn begins, untap your tapped cards so you can use them again.



Illus. Lie Seltman

CASTING SPELLS

To cast a spell, you must pay its mana cost (located in the upper right corner of the card) by tapping lands to make the amount and type of mana which that spell requires. For example, if you were casting Snapdax, Apex of the Hunt, which costs **1**    , you could tap one basic land of any type to pay **1**, plus one Mountain to pay , one Plains to pay , and one Swamp to pay .

Once a spell has been cast, one of two things happens. If the spell is an instant or a sorcery, you follow the instructions on the card, and then you put the card into your graveyard. If the spell is a creature, planeswalker, artifact, or enchantment, you put the card on the table in front of you. The card is now on the battlefield.

1

This symbol means you need one of any kind of mana.



These symbols mean you need one red, one white, and one black mana.

Snapdax, Apex of the Hunt

1    

Legendary Creature — Dinosaur Cat Nightmare 

Mutate **2**     (If you cast this spell for its mutate cost, put it over or under target non-Human creature you own. They mutate into the creature on top plus all abilities from under it.)

Double strike

Whenever this creature mutates, it deals 4 damage to target creature or planeswalker an opponent controls and you gain 4 life.

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WHAT ARE PLANESWALKERS?

Planeswalkers are formidable allies you can summon to fight alongside you. Once a planeswalker is on your side of the battlefield, you can start using their abilities right away.

Because they are so powerful, you'll want to focus on defeating your opponent's planeswalkers. When you declare attackers, you can choose whether each creature is attacking an opponent or a planeswalker they control. Your opponents can block as normal to protect their planeswalker. Whenever damage is dealt to a planeswalker, that many loyalty counters are removed from it.

Once per turn, any time you could cast a sorcery, you can activate one of your planeswalker's loyalty abilities. When you do, add or remove the corresponding number of loyalty counters. You can use dice to keep track of your planeswalker's loyalty counters.

Planeswalkers enter the battlefield with a number of loyalty counters equal to their starting loyalty, which is printed in the lower right corner of the card. If your planeswalker loses all of its loyalty counters, put it into your graveyard.



Death Mage

4

Death Mage — Liliana

M21

one target creature card
graveyard to your hand.

creature. Its controller

loses 2 life for each
their graveyard.

4

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illus. Chris Rallis



GLOSSARY

● (tap)

This symbol means “tap this permanent” (turn it sideways to show that it’s been used). It appears in activation costs. You can’t pay a ● cost if the card is already tapped or if it is a creature that still has summoning sickness.

Activated abilities

An activated ability is an ability that you can activate whenever you want (like casting an instant) as long as you can pay the cost. Each activated ability is formatted in the same way: “Cost: Effect.” For example, Thrashing Brontodon is a creature with the activated ability “**●**, Sacrifice Thrashing Brontodon: Destroy target artifact or enchantment.” Some activated abilities contain the ● (tap) symbol in their costs; this means that you must tap that card to activate the ability. You can’t activate this kind of ability if the permanent is already tapped or if it’s a creature with summoning sickness.

Attach

To move an Aura or Equipment onto another permanent or player.

Aura

An Aura is an enchantment that can be attached to a permanent. Each Aura has the keyword “enchant” followed by what it can be attached to—for example, “enchant creature,” “enchant land,” and so on. When you cast an Aura spell, you choose its target. When the Aura resolves, it enters the battlefield attached to that permanent. The Aura stays there until it’s destroyed or until the permanent it’s attached to leaves the battlefield. If the permanent leaves the battlefield, the Aura card is put into your graveyard.

Battlefield

You and your opponents share the battlefield. Cards that go onto the battlefield (including lands, creatures, planeswalkers, artifacts, and enchantments) are called permanents.

Instants and sorceries are never on the battlefield.

Color

The five *Magic* colors are white, blue, black, red, and green. If a spell or ability tells you to choose a color, you must choose one of those five. A card's color is determined by its mana cost. For example, a card that costs  is blue, and a card that costs * is both red and white.

Colorless

Lands and most artifacts are colorless. Colorless is not a color. If something tells you to choose a color, you can't choose colorless.

Combat damage

Damage dealt by creatures while attacking or blocking. A creature deals combat damage equal to its power. This damage is dealt during the combat damage step. Any other kind of damage doesn't count as combat damage, even if it's dealt during the combat phase or as the result of a creature's ability.

Control

You control spells you cast and permanents that enter the battlefield on your side. Some spells let you gain control of a permanent. This usually means the card will move from your opponent's side to yours.

Controller

A spell's controller is the player who cast it. A permanent's controller is the player who cast it—unless another spell or ability changes who controls it.

Converted mana cost

The total amount of mana in a mana cost, regardless of color. For example, a card with a mana cost of  has a converted mana cost of 5. A card with mana cost  has a converted mana cost of 2.

Cost

A cost is something you have to pay to take another action. You must pay a cost to cast a spell or activate an activated ability. Sometimes a spell or ability will also ask you to pay a cost when it resolves. You can't pay a cost unless you can pay all of it. For example, in addition to its mana cost, Thrill of Possibility requires you to discard a card. You can't cast it if you have no other cards in hand to discard.

Counter a spell or ability

Countering a spell or ability causes it to have no effect. If a spell is countered, it's removed from the stack and put into its owner's graveyard. Once a spell or ability starts to resolve, it's too late to counter it. Lands aren't spells, so they can't be countered.

Counter on a permanent

Some spells and abilities tell you to put a counter on a permanent. The counter marks a change to the permanent that lasts for as long as that permanent is on the battlefield with the counter on it.

A counter usually changes a creature's power and toughness or tracks a planeswalker's current loyalty. You can use anything you want as counters: many players find that glass beads and dice work best.

Create

To create a token is to put a token onto the battlefield.

Damage

Damage can be dealt to players, planeswalkers, and creatures. Damage dealt to a player is subtracted from the player's life total. If a planeswalker is dealt damage, that many loyalty counters are removed from it. If a creature is dealt damage equal to or greater than its toughness in a single turn, it is destroyed (see "Combat Damage").

Deathtouch

A creature dealt any amount of damage by a creature with deathtouch is destroyed.

Defender

Creatures with defender can't attack.

Destroy

To move a permanent from the battlefield to its owner's graveyard. Creatures are destroyed when they've taken damage equal to or greater than their toughness. Many spells and abilities can also destroy permanents without dealing damage to them.

Dies

When a creature dies, it moves from the battlefield to the graveyard. This is usually because the creature has been destroyed (see "Destroy").

Discard

To take a card from your hand and put it into your graveyard. If a spell or ability forces you to discard, you choose which card(s) to discard unless the spell or ability says that another player chooses the card(s) or that you have to discard "at random." If you have more than seven cards in your hand as your turn ends, you must discard until you have seven.

Double strike

Creatures with double strike deal their combat damage twice. When you reach the combat damage step, check to see if any attacking or blocking creatures have first strike or double strike. If so, an extra combat damage step is created just for them. Only creatures

with first strike and double strike get to deal combat damage during this step. After that, the normal combat damage step happens. All other attacking and blocking creatures that survived deal combat damage during this second step, including those with double strike.

Enchant

A keyword ability on all Auras that is always followed by the kind of permanent that the Aura can be attached to—for example, “enchant creature,” “enchant land,” and so on. When you cast the Aura, you must target that kind of permanent.

Enchanted

When an ability of an Aura says “enchanted creature” (or “enchanted artifact,” “enchanted land,” and so on), it means “the creature the Aura is attached to” (see “Aura”).

Enters the battlefield

Some triggered abilities start with “When [this permanent] enters the battlefield . . .” When a permanent with an ability like this is put onto the battlefield, the ability triggers right away (see “Triggered abilities”). Some abilities also trigger when certain other permanents enter the battlefield.

Equip

A keyword ability that lets a player attach an Equipment to a creature they control.

Exile

If a spell or ability exiles a card, that card is set apart from the rest of the game, and it will remain in exile until the end of the game unless a spell or ability is able to bring it back. Cards in exile are normally face up.

Fight

When two creatures fight, each deals damage equal to its power to the other.

First strike

Creatures with first strike deal all of their combat damage before creatures without first strike. When you reach the combat damage step, check to see if any attacking or blocking creatures have first strike or double strike. If so, an extra combat damage step is created just for them. Only creatures with first strike and double strike get to deal combat damage during this step. After that, the normal combat damage step happens. All other attacking and blocking creatures that survived deal combat damage during this second step, including those with double strike.

Flash

A spell with flash can be cast any time you could cast an instant.

Flying

A creature with flying can be blocked only by creatures with flying or reach.

Graveyard

Your graveyard is your discard pile: creatures that die, planeswalkers on the battlefield with no loyalty counters on them, artifacts and enchantments that are destroyed, instants and sorceries you cast, and cards you discard from your hand go here. The cards in your graveyard should always be face up, and anyone can look at them at any time. Each player has their own graveyard.

Hand

You start the game by drawing a hand of seven cards. If you have more than seven cards in your hand as your turn ends, you must discard down to seven.

Haste

A creature with haste can attack on the first turn it enters the battlefield. You can also activate its activated abilities with  in the cost right away.

Hexproof

Hexproof prevents a permanent or player from being the “target” of spells or abilities an opponent controls.

Indestructible

A permanent with indestructible can't be destroyed by damage or by spells or abilities that say “destroy,” such as “destroy target creature.” It can still be put into the graveyard for other reasons.

Legendary

All planeswalkers are legendary. Most often you will find “Legendary” on the card, but if you don't see “Legendary” on a planeswalker, it is still legendary. If a player controls two or more legendary permanents with the same name at the same time, that player must choose one of those permanents to keep and immediately put the rest into their graveyard. Different players can control legendary permanents with the same name.

Library

Your library is your draw pile, which remains face down throughout the game. You lose the game if you are forced to draw a card but cannot because your library is out of cards.

Lifelink

When a creature with lifelink deals damage to a player or to another creature, you gain that much life.

Mana

The magical energy you use to pay for spells and some abilities. Most mana comes from tapping lands. There are five colors of mana:  (white),  (blue),  (black),  (red), and  (green). Some nonbasic lands make  (colorless mana), which can be spent to pay costs that don't require mana of a specific color.

★ Menace

A creature with menace can't be blocked except by two or more creatures.

Mulligan

If you don't like your starting hand for any reason, you can take a mulligan. To take a mulligan, shuffle your hand back into your library, then draw a new hand. If you like your new hand, choose one card to put on the bottom of your library. You can mulligan as many times as you want, but you'll have to put an additional card on the bottom of your library for each time you do.

Opponent

A person you're playing against. If a card says "an opponent," it means one of its controller's opponents.

Owner

The person who starts the game with a card in their deck is that card's owner. Even if your opponent gains control of one of your permanents, you're still its owner. The owner of a token is the player who controlled it when it entered the battlefield.

Permanent

A permanent is any artifact, creature, enchantment, equipment, land, token, or planeswalker that is on the battlefield. Once a permanent is on the battlefield, it stays there until it's destroyed, exiled, sacrificed, or otherwise removed

according to the game rules. You can't remove a permanent from the battlefield just because you want to, even if you control it.

Player

Either you or an opponent. If a spell or ability lets you choose a player, you can choose yourself. You can't choose yourself if the spell or ability says "opponent."

Protection

A creature with protection from something (usually a quality like color or card type) can't be blocked, targeted, dealt damage, enchanted, or equipped by anything with that quality.

✕ Reach

A creature with reach can block a creature with flying. Note that a creature with reach can be blocked by any kind of creature.

Reveal

To reveal is to show a card or cards to all players for a brief time.

Sacrifice

If a spell or ability tells you to "sacrifice" a type of permanent, choose one of your permanents of that type on the battlefield and put it into its owner's graveyard (usually your graveyard, but some spells and abilities allow you to gain control of cards owned by an opponent).

You can sacrifice only permanents you control. Sacrificing a permanent is different from destroying it. You can sacrifice a permanent only if a spell or ability tells you to, or if it's part of a cost.

Scry

To scry is to look at a certain number of cards from the top of your library and then put them either on the top or bottom of your library in any order. For example, if a card says to "scry 2," look at the top two cards of your library, then do any of the following: put both back on the top of your library in any order, put one on the top and one on the bottom of your library, or put both on the bottom of your library in any order.

Search

Some spells and abilities allow you to search for cards that match a given description in game zones that are usually hidden from view: for example, your library, your opponent's library, or your opponent's hand. Though such a spell or ability may require you to search a given zone, you are not required to find what you are searching for.

Spell

All types of cards (except lands) are spells while you're casting them. For example, Walking Corpse is a creature card. While you're casting it, it's a creature spell. When it resolves, it becomes a creature.

Target

Some spells and abilities use the word "target" to describe something that the spell or ability will affect. You must choose all targets for a spell when you cast it. Once you choose targets, you can't change your mind later. If a spell "deals damage to any target," you can choose any creature, player, or planeswalker as a target for that spell.

Token

Some instants, sorceries, and abilities can create artifacts and creatures. These artifacts and creatures are represented by tokens. Tokens are permanents, and they're affected by all the rules, spells, and abilities that affect permanents. If one of your tokens leaves the battlefield, however, it moves to the new zone (such as your graveyard or your hand) and then immediately vanishes from the game.

Trample

Trample allows a creature to deal excess combat damage to the player or planeswalker it's attacking, even if the creature is blocked. If you're attacking with a creature that has trample and it is blocked, you have to assign enough of its combat damage to the creatures blocking it to destroy all of those creatures, and then you can assign any excess damage to the player or planeswalker it's attacking. If an attacking creature with trample is blocked, but there are

no creatures blocking it when damage is assigned (for example, if you used a spell to destroy the blocking creature), then all of its damage is assigned to the player or planeswalker it's attacking.

Triggered abilities

A triggered ability is an ability that is triggered by a specific event occurring in the game. For example, Skeleton Archer is a creature with the triggered ability "When Skeleton Archer enters the battlefield, it deals 1 damage to any target." Each triggered ability starts with the word "when," "whenever," or "at." You don't activate a triggered ability—it automatically triggers whenever the condition or conditions stated in the first part of the ability are met.

Untap

To turn a tapped card upright so it's ready to be used again.

Up to

When a spell or ability lets you choose "up to" a certain number of things, you may choose any number of those things between zero and the specified number. For example, Frost Breath says, "Tap up to two target creatures. Those creatures don't untap during their controller's next untap step." That means you can choose any number of creatures between zero and two, and each of those targeted creatures will tap.

Vigilance

A creature with vigilance doesn't tap to attack. (Vigilance doesn't allow a tapped creature or a creature that entered the battlefield this turn to attack, though.)

X

When you see  in a mana cost or an activation cost, you get to choose the number that X stands for. For example, Volcanic Geyser is an instant spell that costs . Its text says, "Volcanic Geyser deals X damage to any target." When you cast Volcanic Geyser, you choose what number X is. If you pick four, for example, Volcanic Geyser costs  and deals 4 damage to any target. If you pick one, Volcanic Geyser costs  and deals 1 damage to any target.

You

The word "you" on a spell or ability refers to the current controller of that spell or ability.

FAQ

Q: Can my creatures attack my opponent's creatures during combat?

A: No. Creatures can only attack players and planeswalkers, not other creatures. Creatures deal combat damage to one another only when the defending player uses a creature to block an attacking creature.

Q: Do I have to pay a creature's mana cost every turn that it is on the battlefield?

A: No. You only have to pay to cast a creature once. It then stays on the battlefield until it is destroyed or otherwise removed by a spell or ability.

Q: Do I have to tap my creatures to block?

A: No. Only an untapped creature may block, and blocking doesn't cause a creature to become tapped.

Q: Should my library or my hand be visible during the game?

A: Your hand should be visible only to you, and no one may look at your library unless a spell or ability allows you to search your library for something specific.

Q: What happens to instant or sorcery spells after I cast them?

A: They have an effect—whatever is written in the text box—and then you put them into your graveyard.

Questions? Contact us: Support.Wizards.com

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